

## Information Item XX

### Faculty Senate President Report

Faculty Senate President  
April 2018 Report  
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March 29, 2018

#### Update on Faculty Senate efforts to improve transparency, engagement and collaboration across Clemson University

In review of the 2017-18 Faculty Senate term: the **July 2017 report** summarized how the professional development of our students and the knowledge economy of South Carolina are impacted by the engagement of all members of the Clemson University Family in shared governance. The **October report** described the 'Lead Senators project' in Faculty Senate and the shared governance website as our efforts to improve transparency and cultivate having 'seats and voices at the table' thus improve focus on teaching, research and service through knowledge that local and global issues are being addressed. The **February 2018 report** built upon the October report and included a discussion regarding how 'we are all champions' championing the academy in service to our students, disciplines, and the public. In **this report**, the following three points are briefly discussed:

- 1) Online database of committees: Shared Governance website continues to grow and improves transparency plus collaboration
- 2) Lead senators serve to network University-wide, College-level, and Departmental problem-solving and collaborations
- 3) Faculty recruitment, engagement, productivity, and retention for long term success can be improved with a faculty collaboration hub on campus

#### **Online database of committees: our institutional shared governance website**

Committees across campus continue to be added and in some cases reviewed for structure (representation, frequency, purpose). This effort is substantially improving transparency of University-wide participation and crosslinking of hard work faculty, staff and students do to support Clemson University activities and in some cases significant decision-making. Greater detail on this project is included in the February report and the website (link at end of report). In faculty senate, we find this tool increasingly relevant and important and continue reaching out to staff, undergraduate and graduate senates to improve awareness of the website and discuss how it could be expanded or replicated for student-only or staff-only

## Information Item XX

### Faculty Senate President Report

committees. Several issues this year were addressed by pointing to the Shared Governance website and encouraging either re-writing of existing committees, posting existing committees for improved transparency and knowledge, or entry of new committees. In some cases, just knowing that committees exist and function to address important issues has led to relief that a committee with representation is available and on task. We still have work to do on this system and expect to see more committees added and possibly retooled over the next few terms.

#### **Lead senators serve to network University-wide, College-level, and Departmental problem-solving and collaborations**

At the beginning of the 2017-18 term, Faculty Senate launched a 'Lead Senators Project'. The first phase was review of the roles already laid out for Lead Senators (see link at the end of this report). The second phase was monthly pointed discussions of issues and communication networks across Colleges and Units through Lead Senators that represent each College and the Library. These discussions brought up important items and experiences that Lead Senators brought back to their college senators and Deans, as well as other colleagues, faculty and staff across campus. We continue to review the roles of Lead Senators and are amending this to finalize in time for orientation (10. April 2018). This project will soon move into a new phase where, upon evaluation of effectiveness, scope and scale, professional development resources for Lead Senators and the rest of the Executive-Advisory Committee (including officers and committee chairs) will be explored. These resources will provide tools for professionalism, efficiency and leadership experience and facilitate improved inclusiveness in Faculty Senate representation while improving transparency and effectiveness of departmental-College-University communications and problem-solving.

As I move into my role as the most immediate past President of Faculty Senate serving on the Advisory Committee, I will facilitate the next phases of the Lead Senators Project. During these phases, we will build upon the experience of the first collaborative effort that ran through this project where the Lead Senators worked with their College Deans to discuss, prepare, and hold College-wide forums on the benchmarking platform Academic Analytics. Through these open dialogs that expanded to discussion within entire Colleges facilitated by this collaboration, we learned about the scale and scope of the roles that Lead Senators can have while addressing a critical area of concern directly impacting faculty.

## Information Item XX

### Faculty Senate President Report

#### Faculty collaboration hub on campus

As the 2017-18 senate term transitions to the 2018-19 term, a persistent item that many faculty request to be formally explored is establishment of a Faculty Collaboration Hub (or ‘collision space’) on campus. Space is at a premium and this is completely understandable. It also makes locating spaces for opportunities to interact informally and formally amongst faculty increasingly difficult if not impossible. Coffee shops are helpful, but they are structured to be student-focused. A hub space where faculty can converge with intention or to simply be social would be an incredible boost to collaboration, problem-solving, communication, and teaching resource sharing. It would also improve recruitment, engagement, and retention as having such a space demonstrates commitment to faculty welfare and success. Several ‘pop up’ collaboration events this past year, including monthly lunches at the Core Campus Dining Hall led by faculty senate, have been successful and demonstrate that faculty have a strong desire to interact with one another and hold information-sharing, problem-solving, and collaboration-building discussions.

#### Reflection on the 2017-18 term

This term included vibrant discussions and hard work by each of our subcommittees: Policy, Welfare, Research, Finance (and Infrastructure), and Scholastic Policies. Each committee chair organized and worked with their committees to address many important, timely and long-term issues. This work included direct actions leading to specific change and indirect networking to participate in larger discussions fueled by specific issues. It has been an honor to serve as Faculty Senate President to facilitate the resource gathering and/or networking and problem-solving strategies to these committees and the Lead Senators. It has also been a distinct honor to represent faculty as whole in several capacities, and to have the continued opportunity to meet with the Board of Trustees. Thank you sincerely for all you do for Clemson University, including advocacy for faculty and institutional shared governance.

#### Resources:

Clemson University Institutional Shared Governance website:

<https://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/shared-governance/>

Lead Senators responsibilities (listed below Senators list):

<http://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/documents/responsibilities.pdf>